

POSTSCRIPT. July 1950.

The Preface, which appeared in the two previous volumes)

<sup>3rd</sup>  
~~In this new volume of songs by Ivor Gurney nothing requires~~  
 is here reprinted, as it applies equally well to this third  
~~alteration in the Preface here reprinted, which appeared in~~  
 volume;  
~~the two earlier volumes;~~ ~~of songs by him~~ but there are several things to add.

— First, warm thanks are due to the poets, their legal representatives and publishers for generously permitting their poems to appear with Gurney's music in this volume which, like the earlier ones, is a tribute to his memory - a memorial such as he himself would have preferred above all others.

Then, truest gratitude and thanks must be recorded to Dr. Herbert Howells and Mr. Gerald Finzi for their invaluable help in preparing the songs for printing. Theirs was indeed the lion's share in the difficult task of making Gurney's highly individual 'lay-out' and notation readily readable without ~~sacrificing~~ his individuality or the characteristic look of his pages. Where any editing has been done it has been confined to the minimum; only just enough has been added in the way of phrasing and expression marks to secure the clarity of Gurney's intentions. In fact the same principles have been followed as in the earlier volumes.

But even with the most faithful and careful editing it was often impossible to convey by musical signs all Gurney's own ways when performing his ~~songs~~ songs. Moreover, during the years when he could have recorded his songs he was,





POSTSCRIPT. JULY 1930.

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It is, with thanks and due to the house, that I feel  
representatives and explanations for themselves, presenting their  
views on a subject which I have not been able to discuss, like  
the earlier ones, in a tribute to his memory - a memorial such  
as he himself would have preferred above all others.

When, twenty minutes and twenty minutes after recorded to  
Dr. Herbert Spencer and Mr. G. H. Hardy for their invaluable  
help in preparing the notes for printing. I feel very indeed  
the lion's share in the different kind of writing which is highly  
individual, and not only so, but also, really, and without  
any effort, the individuality of the character of the book of  
the notes. I have not editing has been done if it has been  
contained in the original, and I have not been able to  
the way of presenting and organizing matter to make the clarity  
of the notes. In fact the notes of the notes have  
been followed as in the earlier volumes.

It is not even with the most careful and critical editing it  
was of an impossible to convey (or make) clear all of the  
one who were performing his work. Moreover, during the  
years when he could have recorded his words he was



unfortunately, too little known for the gramophone companies to wish to record them, so there is no help to be found in that direction. It therefore seemed to me that some supplementary notes might be useful; they have been written from the first-hand recollections of Dr. Herbert Howells and myself, to one or other of whom Gurney so often sang and played his songs.

For singers and accompanists alike the general approach to Gurney's songs should be much the same as that to Schubert's Lieder, for though Gurney's work is essentially English, and owes more than a little to Folk-Song and to Parry, the musical foundation of his technique was that of the classical Viennese school of composers, ~~in~~ whose music he had studied ~~before~~ before he ever ~~came~~ became a pupil of Stanford's. *the Royal Academy of Music.* Gurney's melodic lines are often long, and always important. They carry the poem as naturally as a river carries a boat. He always thought in terms of lovely voices and wrote for them; ~~so~~ <sup>thus</sup> his songs demand beauty of tone as well as beautiful diction. His apprehension of words was ~~so~~ extremely sensitive and his word-setting so exquisite in its perfection that singers will generally find his songs are "put over" best by keeping to his written note-values without attempting to make "effects" by pulling about the values and rhythms. But there is one important exception. Where ~~dotted notes occur,~~ <sup>followed by a</sup> especially the rhythm ~~is that~~ of a dotted quaver ~~and~~ <sup>semi-</sup> quaver ~~occurs~~, , the dotted note must be made rather longer



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and myself, so one or other of whom knew no other hand  
and shared the source.  
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to Murray's songs should be much the same as that to Schubert's  
lieder, for though Murray's work is essentially English, and  
ones more than a little to talk-song and to poetry, the  
metrical formation of his songs was that of the English  
Vernacular school of song-makers, - whose music he had studied  
before he came to America, and whose style he followed.  
Important - They carry the song as naturally as a river  
carries a boat. It always stands in terms of lively voices  
and words for them; <sup>thus</sup> the songs being mostly of some 40-60  
an essential distinction. The arrangement of words was <sup>entirely</sup>  
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important the rhythm is <sup>of a dotted crotchet and</sup>  
great occurs, the dotted note must be made rather longer



and the short note rather shorter than their face-value, exactly as they ought to be performed in the classical Viennese style. (For the history of this important tradition see Chapter III in "The Interpretation of Music of the XVIIth and XVIIIth Centuries" by Arnold Dolmetsch.)

Gurney himself when singing kept remarkably closely to his own written rhythms, and his word-cum-note values are rich in their expressiveness. He never used a melisma or other ornament without it having some special meaning in relation to the words, and his melismatic passages, which are in the direct line of descent from those of Beethoven, Wagner, and Parry, should always be sung very beautifully and not treated in a perfunctory or apologetic style. Another thing to remember is that Gurney kept the life of a song unbroken from start to finish: even when there were rests or silent bars his mental tension never flagged. Yet there was never any rigidity. Indeed rigidity and dry tone are entirely out of keeping with Gurney's own playing, and must never be applied to his songs. This is of the utmost importance. He himself used both pedals at the same time very freely. The piano accompaniments, as played by him, were often a lovely wash of sound ~~which formed~~ <sup>forming</sup> the background to the voice. The effect cannot well be written out - it was too spontaneous - but it must always be borne in mind, and discreetly employed. Slick clarity in accompanying his songs is the last and worst failure.



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~~There was a very real relationship~~ Between Gurney's

pianistic technique and his manner of performance. <sup>there was a very</sup> ~~His~~

*al relationship. (His)*

playing was dominated by the composer's creative vision:

he had no interest in virtuosity as such, though when he

wanted a special effect he did not hesitate to write and to

play a difficult accompaniment. ~~For~~ The relation of colour

to the central idea and mood of a poem was a prime law for

Gurney. Therefore his songs need from the accompanist such

who plays them an almost creative sympathy with the thought

of <sup>this</sup> ~~a~~ man who was in two senses creative - a poet as well as

a composer.

Marion M. Scott.



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of <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ and was in two senses creative — a poet as well as  
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Walter H. Scott.